Pervez Musharraf, Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz and Foreign Minister Khurshid Mahmood Kasuri.

EAM and Pak FM, *inter alia*, agreed on the following:

(i) to establish a committee on prisoners comprising retired judges of the superior judiciary to visit jails in the two countries and propose steps to ensure humane treatment and expedite release of prisoners who have completed their prison terms; (ii) on Siachen, it was decided that the officials will meet at an early date to address the issue; (iii) to facilitate movement of diplomats Noida and Gurgaon in India and Taxila and Hasan Abdal in Pakistan. Procedures for this will be worked out; (vi) the first meeting of the Joint Anti-terrorism Mechanism would take place before end of March 2007; (vii) regarding Sir Creek, the officials concerned were directed to expedite their work. The joint survey of Sir Creek would begin on 15th January 2007; and (viii) to launch the Fourth Round of Composite Dialogue on 13-14 March 2007.

20. Philippines

EAM visited Cebu (Philippines) from 11-12 January 2007 to attend the Ministerial meetings held before ASEAN-India & East Asia Summits. He also had bilateral meetings with his counterparts from New Zealand, Indonesia and Thailand. Participation of India at the highest level in these two summits and related ministerial meetings was an exercise to strengthen our relations with the ASEAN block as part of our 'Look East' Policy.

Reinstatement of retrenched employees

4630. SHRI ALI ANWAR: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to refer to reply to unstarred Question 1058 given in the Rajya Sabha on 8.3.2007 and state:

(a) the reasons for not reinstating the retrenched employees under Telecom District Himatnagar Gujarat as regular employees despite directions of Hon'ble High Court of Gujarat;

(b) the reasons for these employees being deprived of the benefits of regular employees such as gratuity, Pension, GPF, leave etc. as given to other employees as per their entitlement; and

(c) by when these employees would be given these benefits as given to other regular employees as per the directions of the Hon'ble Court?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) The Hon'ble High Court of Gujarat has only upheld the award of the CGIT for reinstatement of two casual labourers and not ordered for reinstatement of these casual labourers as regular employees.

(b) and (c) Do not arise in view of (a) above.

Nuclear Test By North Korea

4631. SHRI DHARAM PAL SABHARWAL: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the reaction of Government to North Korea's recent successful nuclear test and on the effects of nuclear proliferation in the country;

(b) the action Government are contemplating to check this effect; and

(c) the progress with regard to the action taken/to be taken?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) Government issued a statement on 9 October 2006 stating, "We are deeply concerned at the reported nuclear test conducted by the DPRK. It is unfortunate that the DPRK has conducted such a test in violation of its international commitments, jeopardising peace, stability and security on the Korean Peninsula and in the region. The test also highlights the dangers of clandestine proliferation. We are monitoring the situation and are in close touch with several countries."

(b) and (c) Government are implementing UN Security Council Resolution 1718, which imposed certain restrictive measures on DPRK following the test. Government also support the six party talks to achieve the objective of denuclearisation of the Korean Peninsula, an objective that DPRK has itself endorsed. International efforts to implement the understandings reached in the six-party talks on denuclearisation of the Korean Peninsula are continuing.